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Attorney's Docket No.: 10559-380001 /P10186
Intel Corporation

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented method comprising:

registering a first plurality of agents;

performing a first discovery operation including collecting and aggregating data from a first plurality of network devices with said first plurality of agents said data including two or more duplicate data entries;

coalescing said data in a software file comprising a discovery document, said coalescing comprising:

removing all but one of the duplicate data entries from said discovery document;

assigning a key to each network device based on a precedence file containing instructions for generating keys; and

appending said precedence file to said discovery document;

registering an additional agent; and

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performing a second discovery operation with a second plurality of agents including said first plurality of agents and said additional agent.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said first plurality of agents include a plurality of discovery agents and a plurality of aggregator agents.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said registering the additional agent comprises storing an agent file describing attributes of the additional agent in an agent directory..

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the agent file comprises an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file.

16. (Currently Amended) An article, including instructions residing on a computer-readable medium, the instructions causing a computer to:

receive discovery data collected from a network device
by two or more discovery agents;
aggregate said discovery data;

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generate a relationship file characterizing
relationships among network devices identified by the two or
more discovery agents;

coalesce the discovery data in a software file
comprising a discovery document, said discovery data including
two or more duplicate data entries; and

remove all but one of the duplicate data entries from
the discovery document.

17. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 16, further
comprising instructions that cause the computer machine to
register agents in an agent directory.

18. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 17, wherein
the instructions that cause the computer machine to receive
discovery data comprise instructions that cause the computer
machine to call said two or more discovery agents from the agent
directory.

19. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 17, wherein
the instructions that cause the computer machine to aggregate
said data comprise instructions that cause the computer machine

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to call two or more aggregator agents listed in an agent directory.

20. (Original) The article of claim 17, wherein the agent directory comprises a plurality of Extensible Markup Language (XML) files.

21. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 16, wherein the instructions that cause the computer machine to remove the second duplicate data entry comprise instructions that cause the computer machine to:

identify two or more agents responsible for generating the two or more duplicate data entries, each agent having a priority value;

compare the priority values of the two or more agents;

identify a first agent having a highest priority, said first agent responsible for generating a first duplicate data entry in the two or more duplicate data entries; and

remove all but the first duplicate data entry.

22. (Original) The article of claim 21, wherein the two or more agents are discovery agents.

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23. (Original) The article of claim 21, wherein the two or more agents are aggregator agents.

24. (Original) The article of claim 16, wherein the discovery document is an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file.

25. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 16, wherein the instructions that cause the computer machine to receive discovery data comprise instructions that cause the computer machine to receive discovery data collected from two or more network devices by said two or more discovery agents.

26. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 25, further comprising instructions that cause the computer machine to:

store the discovery document in a discovery database;

and

generate a key for each discovered network device in the discovery document.

27. (Previously Presented) An article, including instructions residing on a computer-readable medium, the instructions causing a computer to:

register a first plurality of agents;

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perform a first discovery operation including collect and aggregate data from a first plurality of network devices with said first plurality of agents said data including two or more duplicate data entries;

coalesce said data in a software file comprising a discovery document by:

removing all but one of the duplicate data entries from said discovery document;

assigning a key to each network device based on a precedence file containing instructions for generating keys; and

appending said precedence file to said discovery document;

register an additional agent; and

perform a second discovery operation with a second plurality of agents including said first plurality of agents and said additional agent.

28. (Original) The article of claim 27, wherein said first plurality of agents include a plurality of discovery agents and a plurality of aggregator agents.

29. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 28, wherein the instructions that cause the computer ~~machine~~ to register the

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additional agent comprise instructions that cause the computer
~~machine~~ to store an agent file describing attributes of the
additional agent in an agent directory.

30. (Original) The article of claim 29, wherein the agent
file comprises an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file.

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